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ABSTRACT

This final report describes activities undertaken by three school districts in the Austin, Texas area to monitor the implementation of the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education (ES/PIE) Program, an initiative of the Working Parents Project (WPP) of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL). The ES/PIE program was designed as a set of activities that schools and school districts, as well as employers, could implement to increase working parents' involvement in the education of their children. After a brief overview of the WPP and related background information, the project goal and objectives for fiscal year 1985 are delineated. Major project activities and accomplishments are reported; these concern the expansion of the project's database on collaborative efforts in SEDL's region, monitoring the implementation of the Business/Employer component of the ES/PIE, promoting the implementation of ES/PIE, and the refinement of practical guidelines to assist school personnel and corporate officers in ES/PIE implementation. Concluding remarks briefly comment on other programs directed toward working parents, other forms of school/business collaboration, time needed to implement the ES/PIE program, the importance of school district size and resources, facilitative characteristics of business/employers, and the importance of leadership by educators. A bibliography of nearly 50 pages, organized into twelve topics, is appended. (RH)

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FINAL REPORT

(December 1, 1984 - November 30, 1985)

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November 30, 1985

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WPP is grateful to the more than 60 families who opened their homes and their lives to us for interviews. Access to these families was facilitated through collaboration with the Communication Workers of America (CWA) and human resources officials in several Austin area companies.

The project appreciates the participation of key representatives from leading programs and agencies who are concerned with working parents and families and who attended its working conference. These individuals came from all six states in SEDL's region and included the project's Advisory Board members. Their insights and experience helped us to better focus our program development efforts.

WPP's program development phase benefitted from an extensive network of agencies and individuals that were identified as being instrumental in promoting or assisting programs that support working parent families and their children. Appreciation is expressed to these individuals and to those who assisted with the implementation of pilot project efforts in the Austin area.

We contacted the superintendents of all the school districts serving the Austin metropolitan area. The Austin Independent School District (AISD), the largest, was very instrumental in the pilot testing of our strategies. The project appreciates that assistance and is especially grateful to Dr. Charles Akins, AISD's Assistant Superintendent for Operations and School-Community Relations.

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It has provided an uncommon opportunity for contacts and dialogue with representatives from leaders in major corporations, labor unions and others in the academic world.

Finally, this report is the product of past and current staff who have contributed their knowledge, skills, and concern for working parents and their children. Invaluable support has been provided by the Administrative Secretary, Sylvia Lewis, with help from the Division's Administrative Assistant, Susan Deason.

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Renato Espinoza, Ph.D.
Senior Researcher

ABSTRACT

For the last three years the Working Parents Project (WPP) conducted research and program development activities directed at working parents and their children, both in single and dual-earner families.

The research phase focused on the interrelationships between work and family life among a sample of Anglo, Black and Mexican American clerical female workers at several businesses in the Austin area. Through in-depth interviews with the adults in these dual-earner and single parent families, the research explored how various aspects of the parents' work experiences affected the ways in which they organized their family life, and, in particular, the care and education of their children.

The work reported here describes monitoring the implementation, by three school districts in the Austin area, of the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education (ES/PIE) Program. Based on research findings from WPP previous studies, the ES/PIE Program was designed as a set of activities that schools and school districts as well as employers could undertake to increase working parents' involvement in the education of their children.

The ES/PIE Program constitutes a unique collaborative effort to deliver important information, knowledge and skills to working parents in the workplace. At the same time, employers are able to open new channels of communications between schools and parents among employees.

The final product from the design and implementation of ES/PIE are detailed and practical guidelines to assist educators in schools and districts implement similar programs to meet their own needs, through their local employers, and the use of their own resources.

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Overview

The Working Parents Project is the most recent of three related SEDL projects that were designed to explore attitudes, behaviors and practices of people and organizations that have an impact on children's education: teachers and administrators, their parents, and the workplaces that employ those parents.

A steady increase of labor participation by women, mothers in particular, is having profound implications for family life, for the relationships between home and schools, and for the needs of these employees as wives and mothers. The fact that these working mothers now devote a large proportion of their time to their work roles away from home, presents families, schools, and employers with new challenges.

Figures compiled in March of 1985 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that 70% of mothers whose youngest children were between the ages of 6 and 13--that is, in elementary and junior high school--are in the labor force. In addition, the labor force activity of mothers of children under 6 continued at a record pace--62.1% in 1985. The total number of mothers in the labor force with children under 6 rose by nearly 200,000 in one year to reach 8.2 million in March 1985. Half of all mothers with children under age 3 were in the labor force--up from one-third in 1975. For those mothers whose youngest child was between 3 and 5, the proportion was 60%, up from 45% a decade ago. Furthermore, there has been a steady increase in the number of female-headed households, in which more than 60% have mothers who work outside the home. More then half of the children in two-parent families have both parents in the labor force. The proportion is highest among 14 to 17 year olds (63%) and lowest for preschoolers (49%) (Bureau of the Census, 1985).

Only 20 years ago, teachers and other school officials could have assumed that most mothers stayed home, could be counted on to volunteer for supportive roles in schools, and would be available for easy, frequent, and personal communication. This is no longer the case.

The increasing proportions of dual-earner families and single-parent families present schools and parents with new barriers to overcome in achieving the kind of home-school collaboration necessary to ensure quality education. Working and/or single parents are finding it harder and harder to keep abreast of what is happening in their children's schools and classrooms. Without a clear understanding of the instructional goals and priorities and the timetable for this instruction, it becomes increasingly difficult for parents to monitor and contribute to the academic achievement of their

children. In the absence of overt, public displays of school support on the part of working parents, their children's teachers and administrators may be led to believe that those parents do not have an interest in their children's education. This could lead educators to lower their expectations of these students. These reciprocal influences can create a gap between the expectations of parents and the schools with children suffering the most.

SEDL's Working Parents Project (WPP) identified the work experience of parents as a likely influence on their ability and availability to become involved in the education of their children. Through in-depth interviews with the adults in a tri-ethnic sample of 30 dual-earner and 30 single parent families, WPP explored the interrelationships between work and family life and, in particular, the relative influence of workplace policies and practices on the involvement of fathers and mothers in their children's education.

The interviews with the 90 adults in the 60 families in the study sample led to the identification of short-term leave policies and practices as a key workplace influence on the ability and availability of working parents to participate in the education of their children.

Short-term leave refers to the mechanisms that allow time away from work in units smaller than a whole day, usually measured in hours. These types of leave allow workers to take care of a range of personal needs, most often of a nature that cannot be anticipated far in advance.

Single parent (mother) families were particularly affected by the relative flexibility or rigidity of their employers, and they had to further contend with restricted social support networks and a more disadvantaged economic situation. Some, being the sole wage earner and often deprived of economic support and other forms of assistance from their former spouses, took additional part-time jobs, which further restricted the amount of time available for their children.

The elementary school-age children in the families of the WPP sample attended schools in the various districts that serve the metropolitan area, including a few who attended parochial schools. These schools varied considerably in terms of their sensitivity to the special needs of working parent families. Teachers' work schedules, distance between schools and homes, lack of alternative caretakers for younger children, and lack of public transportation, were mentioned among some of the barriers to greater school involvement. The value accorded to education, however, was uniformly very high. These working parents may not be particularly visible, but they are as interested in their children's education as the parents who volunteer and participate more often.

Findings from WPP's research were presented to a selected regional cross section of family researchers, educators, service

providers, and children advocates during a mini-conference in the fall of 1983. On the basis of WPP findings, the feedback from the conference participants and from information gathered from other agencies and programs, both in the region and outside the region, the WPP concentrated on the development of a comprehensive model of school-business collaboration designed to facilitate the involvement of working parents in the education of their children.

The implementation of this model, referred to as the Employer-Supported Parents Involvement in Education (ES/PIE), constituted the central activity of the project's FY85 effort. On the basis of the experience gathered and using information from other programs in operation in other locations, some practical guidelines have been developed to assist school administrators and employers in the implementation and evaluation of similar programs in their own communities.

Solutions to the problems that working and single parents encounter when they attempt to play a significant role in their children's education cannot come from national policies or programs. Rather, they ultimately must be resolved by policies, practices, and programs developed at the local level. These will take the form of more creative initiatives of schools, flexible practices of employers, and renewed efforts of the part of working families. Ultimately, it is parents who must commit their efforts, but there is much that schools and employers can do to facilitate working/single parents' involvement in the children's education.

B. BACKGROUND

1. Previous Work

a. Summary of Goals

The Working Parents Project (WPP) began as a research effort designed to explore the interrelations between work and family life, the two most central and time-consuming endeavors of adults in our society. Work, in particular paid employment, provides the link between the individual and the economic life in society. It is not only a source of money and goods, but to a great extent it also determines status as well as access to other rewards, and it influences the lifestyle of the individual and the family unit, where they live, how they dress, what they eat, and other important aspects of life.

Family life is often thought of as a refuge from the harsh and competitive economic world of work. It is characterized by the intensity and salience of emotional ties that bind family members. It also serves an important role as the primary caretaker and nurturer, especially of children who depend on the family unit for their sustenance and protection.

As more and more women, and in particular mothers of young children, have entered the labor force and remained employed, the performance of their traditional roles as wives, mothers, and homemakers has undergone significant changes. It has become harder and harder to maintain the traditional division of labor at home while undertaking full-time employment outside the home. It was the examination of these changes that became the central focus of WPP research, with particular attention to the involvement of parents in the education and care of their children.

b. Summary of Major Findings

The research conducted by the Working Parents Project with a sample of 30 dual-earner and 30 single-parent families provided some indications about some possible effects of rigidity of leave policies on the involvement of working parents in the schooling of their children. The leave policies that were in effect for women in the sample varied in some significant ways. The women were employees either of the phone company or of one of five different large banks. The men who were included in the sample as spouses of the selected sample of women represented almost as many different employers as there were men.

The phone company can be characterized as having a rigid short-term leave policy, meaning those policies affecting employees' ability to be away from the workplace for less than a full day. Normal-

ly, short-term leave is defined and measured in hours or fractions thereof. In effect, the phone company did not provide short-term leave. Tardiness of more than a few minutes was not allowed. Thus, in such cases, workers simply missed a whole day, which was then counted as an unexcused absence.

The least length of time that a phone company worker could take off was a whole day. Employees could have up to three "unexcused, unpaid leave days" in a calendar year. Absences exceeding that maximum number of days allowed were recorded in the workers' files and constituted a cause for dismissal. Employees could not accrue sick leave--rather, a sick worker was defined as being "disabled" and was required to submit a doctor's certificate in order not to be penalized.

Paid vacations were generous, especially for those with many years of seniority. However, such leave had to be taken in blocks of a week or more. The choice of dates for accrued vacation was determined by seniority in each job classification for a particular unit or department.

In addition to scheduled vacation times, seasonal cycles often resulted in a low volume of work. During those periods, supervisors could offer days off without pay (and also without penalty) to one or more employees. Again, seniority was used to determine priority for the option to take those days off. Several married women in the sample, having relatively high total family income, often took advantage of those extra unpaid leave days. Although not scheduled in advance, these days could be used to run errands, rest, and (in some cases) visit their children's schools.

An additional special feature of phone company operation was the irregular weekly schedule for telephone operators. Their days off were determined a week in advance in a seemingly random pattern and on a variable schedule. Women operators in the sample reported difficulties in planning for family festivities and other special occasions, since they did not have advance notice about when they would be off. In some cases, they could get another worker to trade days off to help accommodate their family needs. Finally, some of the operators worked evening and split shifts. The choice of shifts was was also determined by seniority, and most operators in the sample were in positions to choose the shifts that they wanted to work.

Banks, although varying somewhat, could be characterized as having flexible leave policies for most jobs held by the 30 women in the sample. Only four of the 15 dual-earner bank mothers and one of the 15 single (divorced) bank mothers reported rigid leave policies. Approval for their leave requests was largely at the discretion of the employee's supervisor. Most of the women reported having good relations with their supervisors; therefore, access to short-term leave did not seem to be a problem. The leave policies for men in

the dual-earner sample varied somewhat, but a majority (19 out of 30) reported being able to take short leaves that had not been scheduled in advance.

An attempt was made to determine if there were any relationships between (1) flexibility/rigidity of short-term leave policies, (2) the allocation of responsibility for school involvement, and (3) the relative level of that involvement. Based on reports by respondents, it was possible to classify each family in terms of which parent was responsible for monitoring the children's schooling and to judge the relative intensity of that involvement.

Among dual-earner families, couples in which both parents had jobs with flexible leave policies tended to be more involved in the schooling of their children. This involvement generally took the form of (1) more visits to the schools, (2) frequent attendance by both parents at regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, (3) going along on field trips, (4) helping out in special projects, (5) more frequent attendance of school events in which their children were involved, (6) more frequent attendance of whole-school functions such as PTA meetings, and (7) more frequent personal and telephone non-crisis contacts with teachers.

Dual-earner families in which fathers had undertaken the responsibility for maintaining contact with the schools were characterized by the fact that fathers were those who had jobs with flexible leave policies. Among those couples where both parents had jobs with rigid leave policies, it was the mothers who assumed the responsibility for involvement in the education of their children.

Among the mothers in single-parent families, who did not have husbands to supplement or complement the tasks involved in keeping up with children's education, many had to make great sacrifices to be able to do it. Those working in jobs characterized by rigid leave policies had to take time away from other family needs in order to be involved in their children's education.

Unexpectedly, the research data showed that close to 50% of mothers who had flexible leave policies reported that they seldom took advantage of such flexibility for school involvement purposes. These types of leave were characterized as informal arrangements in which employee and supervisor agreed on a method for repayment of the work time missed. This usually involved either working longer hours within the week with no overtime pay, or taking other forms of leave that were accrued in hour units and could be used in hour units.

For the bank employees, WPP interviews indicated that there appeared to be an informal and unwritten hierarchy of acceptable reasons/excuses for them to use unscheduled short-term absences. Included among such absences were coming in late, leaving earlier, or taking two or three hours in the middle of the day. These types of

short-term absences, unlike vacation leave, were not normally scheduled well in advance. They are also treated as different from sick or disability leave, which is unscheduled but of undetermined duration.

Although no respondents reported that supervisors kept special accountings of child or family related leave requests, several indicated that only true "minor emergencies" regarding their children were ever used to justify short-term leaves. Problems with babysitters, minor school or day care accidents, and sudden minor child illnesses all qualified for these types of short-term leave. Some respondents indicated that they felt that taking time to attend a school function would not be considered by co-workers as a legitimate reason. The importance of the groups' judgment of reasons for leaves may have been related to the importance of certain time deadlines and cycles of banking operations, in which the absence of a worker had to be absorbed by the rest of her group, resulting in additional work for the group. An unwritten rule seemed to be operating at the banks which dictated that school involvement during regular working hours would be frowned upon by co-workers and may be deemed unacceptable by supervisors.

Our interviews with working mothers suggest that, overall, these workplaces' "culture"--that is, formal and informal policies and practices, management styles, relationships between employees ad supervisors, the physical setting, and other aspects of the overall corporate philosophy and image--have not yet incorporated adjustments that are necessary to accommodate the needs of the changing composition of the work force.

This labor force now includes a record number of mothers, and large proportion of single parents, and nine out of ten of the single women workers entering the labor force are expected to marry and bear children during their work career.

The "workplace culture," regulated by written and unwritten rules is where our data suggest that changes can be made. These include the recognition of the educational value of parental involvement in schools and the provision of mechanisms and supports to encourage working parents' participation in the education of their children.

Workplace policies and practices, in particular rigidity or the absence of short-term leave mechanisms, were not the only barriers to greater parental involvement that our interviews documented. The relative distance between workplaces, schools and homes, often increased by cross-town busing of children for desegregation purposes, and the lack of reliable or convenient public transportation constituted a major barrier, especially to those parents in the lower income levels who did not own an automobile.

Equally restricting was the relative rigidity that some parents experienced in terms of scheduled activities and teacher/counselor accessibility to those parents whose children needed special assistance.

While conducting this research, the WPP was also seeking out individuals, programs, and agencies within SEDL's region that were actively working to meet the needs of working parents and their children. A regional mini-conference sponsored by the WPP during the fall of 1983 brought together a cross section of family researchers, service providers, and advocates. Conference participants were selected on the basis of their expertise in programs designed to meet the most important needs and concerns identified during the interviews with WPP's sample of dual-earner and single-parent families.

Conference participants brought information and shared expertise about the following types of programs that were identified as being particularly relevant to the needs of these families and their children:

- Employer-assisted child care in its many forms.
- Before-and-after school care provided in schools, operated either by the schools or by outside agents, and either non-profit or proprietary in nature.
- Summer child care programs for school-age children.
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP).
- Business-school collaborative efforts, such as Adopt-a-School programs.
- Community-based child care information and services.
- School and community-based parent education programs, including those designed for single parents or dual-earner couples, and delivered in the workplace (i.e., Brown Bag Seminars).
- Social support groups for single parents.
- Social support groups for working parents.
- Pre-service and in-service training for teachers and other school personnel regarding the special needs and/or problems of working parents, single parents, and non-custodial parents.

An examination of the Project's major sources of information, namely dual-earner and single parents' interviews, the input from conference participants, and information about other programs and efforts in the region, all indicated the need to expand opportunities

for working parents' involvement in the education of their children. An essential as well as viable strategy is the collaboration between employers and schools based on the special characteristics of each community. These efforts can take the form of more creative initiatives by teachers and schools, flexibility on the part of workplaces and schools, and renewed efforts on the part of working parents. Ultimately, it is the working parents who have to commit their efforts, but there is much that schools and employers can do to facilitate their involvement in their children's education.

c. General Recommendations and Suggestions

Although parental involvement in schools became the major focus of our analysis and was singled out for further development in the form of some specific programmatic efforts, there were several other additional general recommendations for employers and schools to take in dealing with the concerns and difficulties reported by the working parents from our sample of dual-earner and single-parent families. These recommendations and suggestions are listed in the brief discussion that follows:

Child Care

Problem: One of the main sources of tardiness and unexcused absences of working parents, particularly working mothers, had to do with problems relating to alternative care for their young children while they were at work. Alternative child care is a need that must be met by any mother who does not have access to grandparents or other relatives residing in or near the household.

As with most other options subject to marketplace forces, the quality of child care in general is directly proportional to its cost. The problem for parents with incomes just above the poverty level is to find affordable quality care.

Recommendation: Available information about various forms of employer support for child care suggests that some form of voucher system for child care assistance is the most viable because it allows different employers to select the level of commitment that is compatible with their willingness to offer this support. It also allows workers to choose arrangements to suit their own preferences. When offered in a "cafeteria" style menu of employee benefits, it suits the needs, resources, and preferences of employers and employees.

After-School Care

Problem: Concern about school-age children who return home before their parents, the so-called "latchkey children" was frequent among our sample.

Recommendation: Businesses and corporations can contribute to support the growing number schools and school districts that are currently participating in extended care in various forms. These include making their facilities available to non-profit providers as an "in-kind" contribution, leasing their unused facilities to providers (proprietary or non-profit), and actually operating their own extended care systems. In most cases, such extended care programs are almost totally self-supporting through fees collected from parents using the services.

Stress at Work

Problem: High stress found to be associated with certain jobs or occupations can not only affect individual workers but also can touch others, including co-workers through certain behavioral reactions, producing negative consequences for all. Stress also can be produced by adverse non-work situations, such as home- or family-related problems. The consequences of stress, whether such stressors are work or family conditions, can affect the whole life of individuals and can spill over to their relationships with co-workers and family alike.

Recommendation: Two highly related and complementary approaches to deal with stress are proposed here. The first consists of a comprehensive examination of the workplace, its job structure and overall functioning as a social organization. The goal is to minimize or eliminate those conditions that produce stress. For example, work quotas, performance standards, and deadlines can be examined, when feasible, to periodically evaluate and re-evaluate their usefulness. Solutions in this area can include a redefinition of jobs, changes in interdependence of jobs, increased worker autonomy, use of teams and relief workers, greater flexibility in work schedules, allocation of work loads, etc.

A second and complementary approach proposed here assumes that there can be certain stress-producing conditions that cannot be eliminated or minimized. However, workers can be trained in techniques that have been found useful in managing unavoidable stress. These techniques are so generic that they often can be used as general coping strategies. Workers trained to use them at work could find their application equally beneficial for circumstances they must deal with at home.

Recommendation: Employee Assistance Programs (EAP's) have been found successful in dealing with substance abuse by workers. The same operating principles should be expanded to offer assistance to employees to learn new coping strategies as part of an overall workplace staff development and/or wellness program.

Stress at Home

Problem: Working parents, and especially working mothers, often felt overwhelmed by the overload arising from their work responsibilities coupled with their home and parenting responsibilities. In addition, parents in the lower income levels often encountered difficulties managing their resources.

Recommendation: The expanded format of the Employee Assistance Programs, as suggested above, could be used to cover some of the special family needs of working parents. Parenting education has long been recognized as a valuable tool to help parents improve their management of their children's behavior. In addition, parents could benefit from consumer/financial counseling--a preventive service that could improve the financial health of not only single parents but of workers in general. This type of information can also be provided in a Noon Time/Sack Lunch setting at the workplace. "Noon Time Seminars" or "Brown Bag Lunch Seminars" have been used successfully by many employers. The advantages are obvious: parents are already there, know each other, and will continue to see each other anyway. Thus, the potential for follow-up support networks being formed from such programs is considerably greater than that of community-based programs that are often not neighborhood- based. These services could include on-site education and training activities, such as Stress Management, Parenting Education, and Financial Counseling.

Community Services

Problem: Many working parents lack the time and the skills to seek out and use community resources.

Recommendation: Information and Referral Services can be offered through the workplace to cover other needs that can be met by existing community-based agencies and services, such as mental health, marital counseling, child abuse, legal assistance, adult education and training, and recreation services.

Career and Advancement Opportunities

Problem: An important source of frustration detected in our study has to do with both objective and subjective (perceived) job security, opportunities for training, transfers, and promotions. Although not all workers are equally motivated to advance into higher levels of responsibility, it is important that such opportunities be open and available to those willing to take them. In many cases, the perception concerning a lack of opportunities is due to a lack of information, rather than to the absence of those opportunities.

Recommendation: The clearest solution is to improve the means for internal information so that employees can be aware of opportunities open to them and can plan according to their own personal priorities.

Scheduling of School Activities and Events

Problem: Many parents in our study reported being often unable to participate in school activities due to time conflicts and rigid leave policies at work.

Recommendation: Because of the diversity of schools and grade levels represented in our samples, the recommendations are couched in general terms, and they do not ignore the fact that some or even many schools and individual teachers are already implementing similar measures. Schools should schedule more activities for after-work hours. However, as was the case for some of the women in our sample, some parents work evenings or irregular shifts. There is a need to find a balance between day, evening, and even weekend activities. In any case, teachers should expect that some parents will not participate. A simple reminder to children about the fact that some parents are very busy, or working and unable to attend, would do much to alleviate the guilt many parents feel for not being there, as well as the disappointment or embarrassment often experienced by their children.

Publicity for Upcoming School Events

Problem: Several parents stated that if they knew well in advance, time-off could be requested or arrangements made with co-workers and supervisors to be away for a short period. Children often can be somewhat unreliable messengers to the home for school news.

Recommendation: A well-publicized schedule of events would undoubtedly enable more parents to anticipate as well as participate in school activities. In addition to direct mailings or phone contacts, schools can promote periodical listings of activities in local newspapers or neighborhood publications. Some schools publish regular newsletters mailed to all residents of their attendance zone.

In addition, schools could provide business and other large employers with calendars of major (and minor) school events. These calendars, posted in the workplace, could help parents plan their own participation in those events listed.

School Involvement of Non-custodial Parents

Problem: In single-parent families (and in step-parent families as well), the custodial parent is not always the one who

is most involved in the children's education. Divorce and loss of custody does not necessarily eliminate non-custodial parents from children's lives. We found several instances of a clear commitment to participate. Schools, however, often ignore the non-custodial parent.

Recommendation: At a minimum, schools should inform non-custodial parents about their children's educational progress. Furthermore, these parents should be advised about school events. It should be left to parents and children to decide who can or should attend school functions. Only in extreme cases, such as when a court order applies, should schools prohibit non-custodial parents' from having access to information held by schools contacts with school officials regarding the educational progress of their children.

Such an expanded communication policy also can include mailing school grades and other school information to non-custodial parents who do not reside in the same city.

Homework

Problem: Although about 40 percent of the single parent families in our sample reported that sometimes other adults helped their children with homework, this also implies that at least 60 percent of these parents do not have any support in this area.

Homework can be a constant source of stress and tension in the family. First, it often calls for parents to constantly monitor children's work on assignments and keep them away from distractions. Second, in addition to being a drain of energy from exhausted parents, this monitoring function often turns into an adversarial relationship. It can become a source of strain in relationships that are already restricted to just a few hours a day for working single mothers who must also manage their households. Third, many mothers are ill-equipped to help their children with many homework assignments. Half of our sample had only a high school education.

Recommendation: No unequivocal solution is suggested by our studies of working parents. However, the issue of homework, its nature and its purpose, is something that must be examined by the education community. To the extent that it builds up and reinforces skills acquired during the school day, it may be a necessary part of education. However, educators also must recognize its potential for frustrating parents who cannot help, and for children who cannot complete assignments.

One solution that has been implemented by some Extended Care Programs is the allocation of space, time, and tutors to super-

vise children who wish to complete their assignments during that period. This frees both parents and children's time at home for recreations, relaxation, or household work.

An alternative solution, implemented by some teachers and schools as an informal policy, is simply not to assign homework to be done over the weekend. With their time already limited, parents and children in dual-earner and single-parent families can allocate weekends for family pursuits of a relaxing nature.

These and other changes in procedures and policies of employers, unions, schools, and other agencies can be of great importance to working parents, in particular, because they allow them greater flexibility to plan not only for the multiple demands arising from their work careers but also for those arising from child care, their children's education, and other family needs. Changes such as those discussed here should be welcomed by all families since they could also accommodate their own needs for a satisfying personal life apart from their jobs and careers.

2. Need for Present Work

In addition to the general recommendations discussed in the previous section, the Working Parents Project identified for further development a need that was detected in its research and a strategy to address that need. The combination of rigid leave policies, relatively low value accorded to educational needs for the purposes of leaves, (which was identified as part of the "corporate culture" of many workplaces), and the relative rigidity found by many parents in their schools, all point towards the need for increased employer-school collaboration. WPP concluded that this is the most viable strategy to bridge the gaps and bring down barriers as a means of empowering parents to participate more fully in the education of their children.

The affirmation of the social value of parents becoming more closely involved in the education of their children is a cornerstone of the WPP's strategy for implementing the recommendations offered by its research findings. There is growing empirical evidence to support the critical role that involved parents can have in the overall academic achievement of children. Research on effective schools has documented the importance of strong parental and community involvement as key elements that can make schools more effective.

Active support of schools by the private sector, can take many forms. Some are based on the transfer of tangible goods, including not only products, but also money and certain services. WPP'sstrategy, however, is designed to produce an impact on the educational attainment of children by helping to increase the level and quality of the participation of working parents in the educational enterprise with the help of their employers and their schools.

Our EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION (ES/PIE) Program is a form of business-school collaboration, or more generally, of employer-school collaboration. The policies, practices, and activities envisioned for both workplaces and schools would not only facilitate, but actually actively promote the involvement of working parents in the education of their children. This can be accomplished by helping parents participate in activities with their own children in their schools and by having schools extend information to working parents in the workplace. These activities would help bring about a massive transfer of social energy to the educational enterprise, the bulk of which is provided by the parents themselves, who have the primary vested interest in the educational success of their children. The role of the employer is to help provide the initial push and help remove some barriers that currently restrain the universal interest that working parents have in providing their children with maximum educational advantages.

For businesses, children must be perceived as future workers who will continue to produce goods and services and as future consumers of those same goods and services. In addition to these long-term considerations, it is important to note that there are benefits in the trend toward an increasing humanization of the workplace, where workers can expect to be treated more as persons than as expendable human resources. The affirmation of the value of children's education in general, and of the children of employees in particular, would let employees know that the employers care for them and their families and should have a positive effect on the overall level of satisfaction of workers and on their morale and productivity.

The strategy that WPP is recommending represents a true collaborative effort between employers and schools. It will require from the school partners a concerted effort to provide information to their business-sector partners about regularly scheduled activities, such as holidays, inservice training days, achievement testing periods, and parent-teacher conference periods, etc.

ES/PIE also requires a greater awareness by school personnel of the limitations of those parents who work full-time during the day, so that at least some school activities, both at the classroom level and at the school-wide level, are scheduled in a more balanced fashion between day and evening hours. Such rearrangements of schedules would increase the likelihood that working parents, with assistance from their employers, could take part in school events.

The Working Parents Project's ultimate goal is to facilitate collaboration throughout SEDL's region between employers and schools to increase working parents' involvement in the education of their children. The development of practical guidelines to assist key decision-makers among schools and employers was proposed as the way to facilitate the attainment of that goal.

In order to refine the preliminary guidelines, the objectives for this year of the project were designed to complement information available from other programs and projects with first-hand information in the implementation of the ES/PIE strategy with selected school districts and businesses in Central Texas.

The voluntary nature of the collaborative efforts proposed required that these institutions generate programs and policies from within. The role of the Working Parents Project in this process was conceived as one of an energizer, an outside resource, a provider of information and technical assistance to both school districts and employers that contemplate implementing the proposed changes. In addition, careful monitoring of the implementation process, along with formative evaluation, were designed to gather data to enrich and refine the guidelines that constitute the final product of this effort.

C. PROJECT GOAL AND OBJECTIVES FOR FY 1985

1. Goal and Objectives

The goal and objectives proposed for the current year are presented here. They will be used to organize the description of the major accomplishments ad products that follow in the next section of this report.

Goal

To facilitate collaboration throughout the SEDL region between employers and schools to increase working parents' involvement in the education of their children.

Objectives

1. To expand the project's data base on collaborative efforts already underway between workplaces and schools in SEDL's region.

2. To monitor the process of implementation of the Schools/School District Component of WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program by selected school districts.

3. To monitor the process of implementation of the Business/Employer Component of WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program by selected large employers.

4. To refine the practical guidelines to assist school administrators and other appropriate school personnel to implement WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program.

5. To refine the practical guidelines to assist managers, personnel directors, and human relations officers to implement the business/employer component of WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program.

6. To promote the implementation of WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program throughout the SEDL region upon completion of the guidelines on the basis of their application during the pilot year.

2. Key Staff and Duties

The key staff and their responsibilities are:

a. Renato Espinoza, Ph.D., Senior Researcher. Performed the overall supervision of project activities; with particular attention to contacts and negotiations with school and business officials; observation and monitoring of implementation activities; and local, regional, and national presentations about the project.

b. Nancy Naron, M.A., Research Association, December 1, 1984, through April 26, 1985. Until her resignation to relocate in another state, Nancy Naron had been associated with the project for almost two years, during which she had been responsible for a major part of the data collection and analysis, and drafting the reports on single parent families. During FY85, she participated in planning and implementation of the WPP program and was responsible for the preparation of various materials used.

c. Maria L. Ramos-Cancel, M. A., Research Association, May, 1985, through the end of November, 1985 (Temporary). Maria Ramos-Cancel has been responsible for designing several instruments used in monitoring project activities, in particular the implementation efforts by school districts and their business partners. In addition, she assisted in the design of the coding system and the actual coding of various files kept by the project. Finally, she has assisted in refining the guidelines, incorporating findings and experiences from the current implementation during this pilot year.

d. Sylvia Lewis, Administrative Secretary, and Susan Deason, Administrative Assistant to the Division, have performed various duties in support of the activities of the project. Sylvia Lewis has developed and kept various electronic files in the word-processing equipment and has assisted in the design of the coding of some of those files.

In addition to the regular project staff, assistance was rendered at various times by other staff of the Division of Family, School, and Community Studies, and by other SEDL staff.

D. MAJOR PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The description and discussion of the project activities and accomplishments of this fiscal year follows the statement of goals and objectives. Minor modifications are indicated and explained in this section. Each objective will be stated and followed by a narrative or listing of the activities performed to meet that objective. Some intermediate products and deliverables will be described and discussed in the text of the report will then be presented in full as Appendices.

Re-Statement of Project Goal

To facilitate collaboration throughout the SEDL region between employers and schools to increase working parents' involvement in the schools (by developing practical guides designed to assist decision-makers among employers and school officials in implementing policies, practices, and programs designed to assist working parents and their children).

1. Objective 1 and Activities

> To expand the Project's data base on collaborative efforts already underway between workplaces and schools in SEDL's region.

The activities proposed to achieve this objective addressed the need to continue building and updating files of project-related information. The types of information and materials acquired fall into two groups. First, there are reports, brochures, newsletters, and other publications of projects, organizations, and individuals actively engaged in work that assists both dual-earner and single parent families and their children. Second, there are materials and reports on relevant research, especially those collected during the research design, data collection, and data-analysis phases of the project.

In order to make these data bases more useful for project needs and also for possible dissemination efforts, appropriate information about the various items collected and contacts made has been stored in the form of electronic (magnetic) records using word-processing equipment available to the project (a Phillips MICOM Word Processor).

These records have been organized into two main files, and each file has been classified and coded in ways that allow the project to generate smaller, more focused listings. The latter are suitable for printing either as lists of bibliographical references on specific topics or as lists of programs, projects, and resources addressing specific areas of concern about working parents and their children.

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a. Programs, Projects, and Organizations File (PPO)

During various phases of this project, a number of contacts have been made with many organizations, programs, projects. and individuals whose work, activities, publications, or services were potentially relevant to working parents and their children. These contacts also include organizations and individuals that have requested information about the project and others who have been included in our prior dissemination efforts. Various lists of these contacts have been prepared and used for special dissemination efforts. They have been collectively referred to as the "WPP Network Files."

In order to make better use of the information available in the various contacts files, some separate groupings have been made.

The first major category refers to geographic location and/or coverage. It was important to identify which of those contacts were located in each one of the states of SEDL's region (Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas). By exclusion, the rest were grouped together as "national" contacts. These national contacts include organizations with national scope as well as some specific to other states or cities. In all cases, they are sources of information, publications, and/or services relevant to work and family.

In addition to geographic location, those contacts that can be considered potential resources as providers of information, materials, or services have been subjected to a further classification scheme. This classification system and the coding of the electronic records can then be used to generate special lists of resources for specific areas of concern.

The classification system that has been developed consists of two levels: (1) the organization's major area of concern, and (2) the specific issues or topics relevant to WPP work that are addressed in materials obtained from a particular source:

CODE	ORGANIZATION'S MAJOR AREA OF CONCERN
CHC	Child Care
CHD	Children
EDU	Education/schools in general
FAM	Families
WKP	Working Parents
WOM	Women
OTH	Other areas

The categories used for the specific issues addressed are:

CODE	SPECIFIC ISSUES ADDRESSED
GWFI	General Work and Family Issues
WPIS	Working Parents' Involvement in Children's School/Education
WPIC	Working Parents Involvement in Children's Health/Care
SSWP	School Support of Working Parents
WSWP	Workplace Support of Working Parents
CSWP	Community Support of Working Parents
GSWP	Government Support of Working Parents
WSSE	Workplace Support of School/Education
CSSE	Community Support of School/Education
GSSE	Government Support of School/Education
WSCS	Workplace Support of Children's Health/Care Services
CSCS	Community Support of Children's Health/Care Services

b. Reference File

The references collected during the initial stages of the project include research reports, reviews of research, selected articles from magazines and major newspapers, books, and various other reports and guides. In order to break down the list which now numbers about 550 entries, major content areas have been defined, and materials have been assigned to one primary major content area. About 15% of the items have been judged equally relevant to a second major content area. This coding system allows for the generation of special lists. If needed, the combination of two or more related categories or a further breakdown of any of the major categories into even more restricted listings can be produced.

The major categories and the corresponding codes are:

CODE	CATEGORIES AND CONTENTS
BMFA	Black and other minority families and their children. Includes comparisons among various groups.
BPPP	Business/employer policies, practices, and programs that affect workers, their families, and children. Includes management styles, types of leave benefits, work schedules, employer-supported child care, and other workplace factors.
CCGE	Child care in general. Includes various forms of child care, such as after-school care, self-care (latchkey children), summer care, and early adolescent care. It also includes materials about employer-supported child care, child care standards, etc.
DIVO	Divorce. Includes divorce and its effects on spouses and their children, child support, custody, and other related issues.
FAGE	Family in general. Includes family theory, roles, marriage, remarriage, parenting, and sex roles.
HSPI	Home-school relationships, including parental involvement in schools and education, tutoring, homework, and other educational issues relating to parents and families.
SPFA	Single parent families and their children. Includes these families as a family form, whether produced by separation, divorce, widowhood or never married mothers; includes female-headed households.
WOFA	Work-family interrelationships. Includes working mothers' issues, dual-careers, influences of work on family life and vice versa.
WORK	Employment in general. Includes statistics, demographics, unemployment, career education, training, and children's perceptions and attitudes towards work.

WOWO	Working women in general. Includes statistics, demographics, labor force participation, labor market, attitudes of and towards working women.

There are currently about 550 items entered, coded, sorted, alphabetized, and ready for printing either together or as separate reference lists. The lists by major category average about 50 entries, with the exception the categories of "Family in General, "Family and Work," and "Working Women in General," which include about twice as many entries. These three categories represent the most central concerns of the project over the last three years.

During the final quarter of the project, the addition of new items to these two data bases continued, but at a greatly reduced rate, incorporating only additions that continue to come to our attention as part of our regular project-related activities.

2. Objectives 2 and 3 and Activities

Objective 2

To monitor the process of implementation of the School/ LEA component of WPP's Employer Supported Parental Involvement in School Program by Selected LEAs.

Objective 3.

To monitor the process of implementation of the Business/corporate component of WPP's Employer Supported Parental Involvement in Education Program by selected large employers.

a. Introduction

These two objectives, although listed separately, are very closely related. Although the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education (ES/PIE) Program has been previously conceptualized and described in terms of two major components, one being the school/ school district component and the other the business/employer component, in reality it requires that both partners be present and engaged in a collaborative effort.

Therefore, the activities pursued to get the program implemented and to monitor that implementation constituted a series of contacts and exchanges between the would-be partners first, with the WPP staff acting as an energizer, a resource, and a very interested/observant by-stander. At each step, actions performed by one partner had, as a consequence, actions performed by the other. This required a new round of actions and reactions by the partner who initiated the effort.

In order to keep track of the various levels of program implementation and monitoring, a series of documents were developed. Some of these documents are conceptual representations of the WPP project and of the ES/PIE program. Both are a result of the application of the Program Modeling Technique developed by Borich (1979) for representing programs or projects. The remaining documents are status reports intended to accompany the conceptual representations of the WPP project and of the ES/PIE program. Both types of documents are periodically updated and modified, as events take place and new insights are obtained. A sample of these documents is presented as part of the guidelines, which are discussed in detail in a later section.

In order to best describe the developments that occurred during the time WPP staff approached school districts in the Austin area, a chronology of major events and activities will be presented.

b. Initial Contacts with School Districts in the Austin Area

Seven school districts in the Austin area were targeted as candidates for the implementation of ES/PIE. The decision to stay within driving distance of SEDL headquarters was based on practical as well as fiscal considerations.

The seven candidates were initially sent a copy of the Project's 1984 Executive Summary as part of a larger information-sharing effort. this document contained a set of general recommendations about ways to encourage parental involvement for employers and schools, but it did not elaborate on the partnership concept that would become the central aspect of ES/PIE.

The Executive Summary was followed by a letter to each of the seven Superintendents requesting an appointment for a personal visit. Enclosed with the letter was a document that contained a restatement of the essential recommendations of the ES/PIE program. The letter stated that the purpose for the WPP staff visit would be to explore the feasibility of implementing the proposed recommendations in their respective districts on a pilot basis.

The first round of personal contacts with these superintendents provided WPP with a clear indication of the differences among the districts in terms of size, staff resources, and overall stage of development. A brief description of the size and location of these districts in relation to Austin is provided in the discussion that follows:

(1) Austin Independent School District, Dr. John Ellis, Superintendent. The Austin Independent School District (AISD) is the largest and most stable district in the area. The enrollment for 1984-85 was over 56,000 students in 8 high schools, 10 junior high schools, 60 elementary schools, and 14 programs for special popula-

tions, including programs for evening students and teen-age pregnant students.

AISD serves the city of Austin and has experienced a relatively steady rate of growth. The population of Austin has doubled in the last 20 years to an estimated 420,000 residents in 1985. The AISD has an established administrative organization with various specialized departments and programs, including an Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Community Resources.

(2) Eanes Independent School District, Dr. Don Rogers, Superintendent. Eanes Independent School district is another relatively stable district serving two small communities and an unincorporated area immediately west of Austin. It serves almost 4,000 students with one high school, one middle school, and four elementary schools. The population is suburban, predominantly Anglo, with a large proportion of professionals, self-employed businessmen or managers who live in apartments, condominiums, and single-family homes priced in the moderate to expensive range. Part of the Eanes ISD growth is attributed to "white flight" from the Austin ISD population.

(3) Round Rock Independent School District, Dr. Brent Rock, Superintendent. Round Rock Independent School District, originally serving the city of Round Rock, 18 miles north of Austin, and the surrounding farming areas to the east and ranch lands to the west, has experienced explosive growth as a consequence of the high tech industrial development in Austin's north-west corridor. Growth is also attributed to "white flight" experienced during the 1970's as the Austin Independent School District implemented a court-ordered desegregation plan. The Round Rock School District population has almost doubled within the last 10 years with urban development of mostly ranch land northwest of the city. There are currently about 13,000 students in two high schools, four middle schools, and 11 elementary schools. Due to the residential development pattern, the population and the schools are located in two clusters north and northwest of Austin, about nine miles from each other.

(4) Leander Independent School District, Mr. Fred A. Hopson, Superintendent. Leander Independent School District is following the growth pattern of Round Rock Independent School District. From serving two small towns, Cedar Park and Leander, and the surrounding rural areas, it has seen the rapid expansion of urban developments of middle to high priced homes occupying the land formerly devoted to low-intensity ranching. It currently serves almost 3,000 students in one high school, one junior high school, and two elementary schools.

(5) The Other Districts. Del Valle Independent School District (4,400 students), Pflugerville Independent School District (2,700 students), and Manor Independent School District (900 students), are located to the east and southeast of Austin. All are experiencing

rapid urbanization and expect to double their student population within the next 10 to 15 years as the population of the Austin Metropolitan Area continues its steady growth.

In addition to growth rates that vary from fast and steady to explosive, all of these school districts are experiencing growing pains that in some cases have been made more acute by the demands imposed on them by Texas legislatively mandated school reforms, chiefly House Bill 72, enacted in 1985. The districts vary in their relative capacity and staff resources to respond to the challenges to improve their performance. Therefore, they also varied in the relative priority each assigned to the types of recommendations suggested by ES/PIE.

c. Results of the Initial Contacts.

All the superintendents or their representatives who met with WPP staff endorsed and valued the suggested Project recommendations regarding school-employer collaboration. They varied, however, in their readiness to devote the staff time and resources required to implement the suggestions. The smaller districts felt that they were not in a position to undertake the type of WPP proposed initiatives, given their anticipated burdens related to implementation of new school reform measures. All, however, expressed a readiness and willingness to participate and support any programs, activities, or events that Austin and Round Rock (the bigger districts) could develop and implement with technical assistance from WPP.

As a result of those contacts, collaboration was initiated, with different rates of speed and support, with Austin ISD and Round Rock ISD, and later Leander ISD. The work with Austin ISD has resulted in the greatest amount of progress. Therefore, the activities with this district will be briefly summarized and presented in chronological order, starting with the first month of the current project year.

d. ES/PIE Implementation Chronology at Austin ISD

In this section, a concise chronology of events regarding the Employer Supported Parental Involvement in Education (ES/PIE) program implementation will be presented. Described are major events, by month, through the activities ending in November 1985. Prior to the first formal contact with the Austin Independent School District (AISD) officials to request their participation in this pilot implementation, Working Parents Project (WPP) staff had interviewed several AISD officials concerning their Adopt-a-School program (AAS), a highly successful joint venture between AISD and the Austin Chamber of Commerce.

During those interviews WPP staff shared information about the project recommendations being developed. AISD officials were promised additional information when the project approached the pilot implementation stage. At the end of the project year, a copy of

WPP's Executive Summary, containing the recommendations for school-business collaboration, was shared with Dr. Charles Akins, Assistant Superintendent for School Community Relations.

January, 1985 During this month, the general recommendations offered in that Executive Summary were refined in a document entitled "Dual-earner, Single Parent Families and Education: Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration." This document contained the recommendations were referred to as the Employer Supported Parental Involvement in Education, or ES/PIE. The term "Education" is used to reflect the broader scope of the measures contained in the recommendations that address school involvement as a part of involvement in education.

The document containing the description of ES/PIE was sent, along with a letter requesting a date for a meeting with WPP staff, to Dr. Charles Akins. A personal visit from WPP staff was set by him for mid January, 1985.

For that first formal visit by WPP, Dr. Akins gathered six members of his staff. They included individuals with responsibilities for special projects and the district's parental involvement specialist. The reception to the WPP proposal from this group was very positive, and Dr. Akins set as the next step a similar presentation to the Instructional Cabinet. This is a group of third level administrators chaired by Dr. Gonzalo Garza. Dr. Akins felt that the district officials input and acceptance of the proposal by this group was important to its future implementation.

February, 1985 The presentation to the Cabinet took place in mid-February, 1985. The reception of the proposal by that group was positive, although they felt that a full-fledged implementation should not be attempted until the '86-'87 school year. They felt that their own ability to participate was impaired by the burdens being imposed on them by the implementation of the mandated educational reforms just passed by the Texas Legislature.

On the basis of that feedback, Dr. Akins proceeded to work towards a pilot implementation of a restricted version of ES/PIE with a small number of business partners.

March, 1985 A new meeting was set up by Dr. Akins and some additional AISD staff for mid-March, 1985. At that time, the overall strategy for implementing the pilot program was discussed.

The first issue discussed was the criteria for use in targeting businesses to be approached for the pilot effort. It was decided that due to the pilot nature of the project, and the interest of both AISD and SEDL to move ahead as soon as possible, large employers in high-tech industries should be approached first, since they are widely regarded as leaders by the business community. Therefore,

obtaining the collaboration of one would facilitate the approach to other businesses.

Since AISD was already involved with a number of large businesses through the Chamber of Commerce in the Adopt-a-School program, a decision was made to use some of those contacts to approach companies. It was agreed that when using these business contacts itwould be made clear that this was a new and different project and that it did not have to be restricted to current adopters. Further, the nature of the activities to be performed during the program should be tailored to the needs and restrictions of each partner.

With respect to the strategy to be followed in these contacts, it was decided that the initiative to set up the first visit should come from AISD and, in particular, from Dr. Akins, whose title was then Assistant Superintendent for School-Community Relations. It was also agreed that, whenever possible, WPP staff would be invited to assist to the initial visits, to underscore WPP's role as a resource to both the district and the business partners.

In preparation for the first joint AISD/WPP contact with a business partner, it became apparent during conversations that the AISD staff was approaching the pilot project with a more limited scope than the original ES/PIE formulation. In fact, AISD staff had seized one specific strategy, the workplace seminars, to be the central feature of their approach to providing information to working parents. They had taken the generic partnership recommendation and adapted it to meet their own needs, rather than following the more ambitious agenda envisioned in the abstract by the WPP researchers.

AISD's immediate needs were to communicate what they considered to be important information about changes brought about by the educational reform to working parents, rather than information about specific schools. Therefore, the workplace seminars, which would be attended by parents having children in various schools, became the ideal venicle to convey that information. Further, since the pilot implementation was being conceived as a district-wide project, it made sense to concentrate on information about district-wide educational issues that could be presented through workplace seminars to the employees of a variety of business community partners.

The information being provided to working parents was expected to increase their awareness about the changes in curriculum and other specific policy changes. With such knowledge, parents were expected to approach the appropriate personnel in their childrens' schools and seek ways of increasing the level and quality of participation in the education of their children. In essence, this is the goal proposed for ES/PIE.

Depending on the nature of the business partners, AISD planned to promote the adoption of some of the additional measures suggested in

ES/PIE for employers. These include more flexible leaves and other forms of employer support for school involvement that could evolve as a natural extension of their initial commitment to host the workplace seminars. Using this approach, the implementation process proceeded.

April, 1985 A work session with AISD staff was held in April, and plans were made to develop some topics for workplace seminars and to prepare the approach to corporations. Assignments were made to WPP to make preliminary contacts with Motorola, a large employer in the area. An initial interview was set up and conducted by WPP staff with Motorola's Director of the Employee Assistance Program. Based on the information obtained, a formal meeting between WPP, AISD, and the Motorola manager was set up. During that interview, the Director, who had received the ES/PIE document in advance of the meeting, proceeded to reviewed some of the corporate policies, in particular those regarding leave policies and communications within the plant. This appeared to be a good potential pilot site, since regular meetings were conducted by all employees in the different sections on an irregular but very frequent basis. Also there were regular large gatherings that often included some information about health as part of their wellness program. Based on the information obtained, a formal meeting between AISD, WPP, and the Motorola manager in charge of communications was set up.

May, 1985 The joint meeting between AISD, WPP, and the Motorola executive revealed some barriers that were not apparent from the discussion held with the EAP Director. After describing his place and roles within the corporate structure, the communications manager started the meeting by sharing with us, some special aspects of their "corporate culture," which he saw as "obstacles" to the implementation of the type of partnership that was being proposed. A summary discussion of these obstacles follows:

1. The nature of its work force, which he characterized as "open, free enterprise," or in other words, "non-union."

2. The strongest values in Motorola's corporate culture are "profits" and "productivity." They believe they are in an economic war with their Japanese competitors, and anything and everything has to be done to beat them. They claim to be the only American company that currently sells computer-related equipment to the Japanese.

3. Their work force fully adheres to these values, and according to him, expects management to come one down to them and set goals, quotas, timetable, deadlines, etc.

4. Management, on the other hand, has adopted a "participative management" style, in which there are open communication lines within and between teams and groups and up and down the hierarchies. Anything that affects productivity and efficiency, of either machines or processes, is discussed in

regular team or departmental meetings, which can be called by anybody but include everybody. In these meetings, work-related problems are resolved with the input from as few as five people to as many as 400.

5. Cited were examples of the "closed" nature of Motorola. There apparently is an unwritten policy of not conducting surveys using their employees, unless it can be justified for productivity's sake and it is done by an "outside professional." For example, they decided to explore getting involved in the child care issue (thinking that it could increase productivity). When they found out that most employees preferred child care near their homes, it was dropped since the plants are located in business/industrial areas and employees come from all over town.

6. Another example of control over the internal environment as well as activities outside the plants is Motorolas' approach to the Adopt-a-School program. The communications manager said:

> "I decided that it would be good for our corporate image to get involved. I went and very carefully looked for someone with the right qualities to handle that program. Then I started to "groom" her for the job, taking her to the AAS breakfasts, luncheons, and to meet people. Then, we carefully selected other employees to form a Committee. We are very satisfied with our progress now."

May, 1985 Although not formally turned down, AISD's request/offer appeared to be unacceptable. Results of the AISD/Motorola meeting were inconclusive. Motorola proposed to study some limited possibilities of access for AISD, but since the school year was almost over, nothing concrete would be done until later in the summer of 1985. In the meantime, Motorola extended an invitation was extended to WPP and AISD to visit the plants to get a better idea of the barriers and possibilities. Finally, it was suggested that AISD/WPP approach IBM, which has a reputation for being concerned with the well being of their employees.

From May and until the present, Motorola has turned attention to its own internal problems, created by an over-supply of semi-conductors in the world market. Some of the adjustments include lay-offs, forced vacations, shorter work weeks, and other emergency measures.

During this period, a major reorganization at AISD resulted in increased responsibilities for Dr. Akins, who had been acting as the chief AISD representative in the corporate contacts to promote ES/PIE. In spite of this, other corporate contacts were followed, three of which have resulted in concrete instances of program imple-

mentation. Those were with an engineering consulting firm, a state agency, and a major bank.

June, 1985 During June, a formal visit by AISD and WPP staff with officials of IBM, another large employer in the area, resulted in a firm commitment for collaboration. The goal was to offer one or more workplace seminars just before or just after the start of the 1985 school year. On the basis of that commitment, plans, timetables, and assignments were made. A pilot implementation plan was developed and initiated during additional work sessions for the next two months. During this period, some key AISD staff went on summer vacation. As a result, some of the work involved in developing topics for the workplace seminars was postponed until their return in August.

July, 1985 During July, additional contacts were jointly pursued by AISD and WPP staff. One of these, with a large engineering firm, resulted in another pilot partner who made plans for a seminar to be carried out in August.

During this month, Dr. Akins requested that WPP assist one of his staff members in the preparation of the formal proposal to obtain the approval of ES/PIE as a formal project by the Superintendent and his Cabinet.

August, 1985 This month represents the actual launching of the ES/PIE program. It was the time when all the negotiations and preparation began to bear concrete results. A total of six workplace seminars have subsequently been conducted at four different workplaces, including the largest corporation in Austin, the largest engineering/consulting firm, one of the largest state government agencies, and one of the six largest banks in the city. Additional commitments have been made by AISD, for the month of December, with one of the largest insurance companies and the local telephone company.

e. ES/PIE Implementation in the Other Nearby Districts.

Though contact was established with the other Austin area school districts simultaneously with AISD, the relative success and response from the other districts was very different, and for a variety of reasons.

The Eanes Independent School District serves a population of relatively high income, high education families. Their level of parental involvement in education was reported as being relatively high. The only segment of their working parent population that they felt could benefit from some special attention are the single parent families.

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However, most of these parents are employed in Austin, since there are few businesses within their school district boundaries, and they are within easy driving distance to almost anywhere in the metropolitan area. Therefore, these administrators believe that school-based efforts, rather than workplace changes, are most likely to be successful in addressing these single parent's needs.

Del Valle Independent School District administrators have attempted to approach a large high-tech corporation in their area without success. The corporation shares some of the same protective feelings towards their employees as did Motorola. In addition, they are engaged in secret defensive/offensive weapons development for the government that tends to increase the barriers that they erect with the outside world.

The Manor Independent School District is a largely rural area, but it is expected to undergo major transformations in the near future. It is the most likely site for a new airport that may be build to relieve the Austin airport within the next 10 years. At the time of WPP contacts, its board was searching for a new Superintendent, and the interim Superintendent was reluctant to consider any new programs in anticipation of the change in leadership.

Pflugerville Independent School District officials were interested in dove-tailing into any programs that Austin or Round Rock, their larger neighbors to the south and north, respectively, could implement. There are no major employers within their district's boundaries, as most residents commute to jobs in Austin, Round Rock, or Temple.

Leander proved to be a rather interesting small district. Contacts were hindered by reorganizations and summer recess, but eventually a meeting was held with the person appointed to the just-created position of Director of Planning, Research, and Evaluation.

Leander officials are preparing themselves for a period of explosive growth, as their district grows from serving two small towns and the surrounding ranches to include a number of new, high-price housing developments around lake areas. The relocation of several divisions of the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M) company to a site within the district promises to populate the new housing with highly paid and highly educated scientists, engineers, and technicians. Within the context of their Community Education program, and with the help of a unique organization developed to support quality education, they are preparing to adapt the ES/PIE program beginning with the 1986/87 school year.

The Project for the Advancement of Childhood Education (P.A.C.E.) is a non-profit corporation designed to support and promote quality education in the Leander district. Its board of directors includes school district officials, leading businessmen, bankers, developers,

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and the mayors of both towns. They have developed brochures, supported bond elections, and funded some of the research used for planning for the future economic and educational development of their communities.

Finally, the Round Rock Independent School District, second in size to Austin, was also searching for a superintendent at the time of the initial contact. In spite of that, a meeting was held with the Assistant Superintendent for Planning and his assistant. Following the WPP presentation, he expressed great interest in the program and promised to present it for a formal endorsement by the Executive Committee of the district.

The responsibility for working with WPP staff was assigned to an administrator who was in charge of developing "Partners in Education," the equivalent to Austin's Adopt-a-School Program. Unfortunately that person became ill, and in the transfer of her duties to another staff member, accompanied by a move to a different building, the files were lost or misplaced. As a result of these unanticipated complications, the process had to start again, making it necessary to separate ES/PIE from their Partners in Education Program, which was also currently in the planning/launching stage.

However, there was at least one event that resulted from these efforts. It will be described later, as part of the discussion of Round Rock Independent School district representatives sharing in two of the pilot workplace seminars conducted during this pilot year.

e. The Workplace Seminars

Altogether, four of the formal commitments for collaboration have resulted in six workplace seminars. Two seminars were held at IBM, one at Espey-Huston (a large engineering consulting firm employing about 600 people) one at the State Comptrollers' Office (a state agency with about 1,900 employees in two facilities in or near downtown Austin) and two at one of the five largest downtown banks in Austin. All workplace seminars so far have been held during the lunch hour. Three were held in August, just before the start of the school year, and the other three during October and November.

At the IBM seminars, presenters were from the Austin ISD and also from Round Rock ISD. The participation of the latter was requested by IBM officials because about a third of their employees live in the Round Rock school district area.

All the seminars were developed by AISD personnel with assistance from the WPP staff. In addition, WPP undertook a major role in designing and conducting an evaluation of the seminars as well as overall monitoring of the implementation process.

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On the day of the seminars, our main IBM contact, a manager for the Support Services Division at the IBM plant, received and escorted the Austin ISD and Round Rock ISU officials to the room where the seminars were to be held. He provided a brief introduction to the seminar and to the lead person from Austin ISD. His staff also provided assistance with reproducing evaluation and survey forms, helping to get the room ready, and distributing the forms.

At Espey-Huston, a founding partner of the firm was also a workshop participant. The introduction of the seminar and presenters was done by WPP's main contact, who was from the Human Resources Department.

The specific topics and presenters were different for the first two seminars. This was due to the availability for the second seminar of an AISD official with responsibility for examining the legislative mandates and determining compliance of districts' programs and policies with laws and regulations. During that seminar, she offered a brief legislative review as introduction to specific information shared about new curriculum, attendance, and testing requirements.

Nine participants attended each of the two IBM seminars, and 14 parents attended the Espey Huston seminar. The State Comptroller's Office session was attended by 21 parents, and the banks' seminars had 25 and 8 participants, respectively.

The fliers, agenda and titles of presenters for the seminars are included as part of the Guidelines. These also contain copies of the evaluation forms and a survey of employee interest in a range of topics that could be offered as possibilities for future seminars.

Special information-gathering documents and strategies have been used to obtain a complete picture not only from participants, but also from presenters and from officials of the participating school districts and businesses. Their reactions, comments, and suggestions, as well as other insights gathered from post-seminar debriefings with participants, have been used to assess the strengths and weaknesses of these efforts, but more importantly, to enrich and refine the guidelines described in the following section. The monitoring and evaluation information collected constitutes key input for the development and refinement of guidelines to implement the ES/PIE program. These guidelines are expected to be instrumental in promoting collaboration efforts between school districts and businesses throughout the Southwest Region.

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3. Objectives 4 and 5

Objective 4.

To refine the practical guidelines to assist school administrators and other appropriate school personnel to implement WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program.

Objective 5.

To refine the practical guidelines to assist managers, personnel directors, and human relations officers to implement the business/employer component of WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program.

a. Introduction

These two objectives, although listed separately, are very closely related. In the original conceptualization of the ES/PIE program, there were two components. They were described as the policies, practices, or actions that each "partner" in the collaboration effort would perform. This separation helped in describing the program. However, actual implementation cannot be true "collaboration" if only one of the components is implemented in the absence of actions by the other "partner."

Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that a business or employer, by its own initiative, would undertake the implementation of its component in the absence of a school partner. In practice, it has been the school initiative that has struck a responsive cord in the business/employer sector. WPP's own experience in promoting the implementation for the Austin area ES/PIE program during FY85 quickly underscored this perception.

Although in the past a working assumption was that there would be two separate guidelines, it was abandoned as soon as the implementation efforts begun. The bulk of preparatory work for this partnership has to be performed by the educational agency partner. Most of the help needed from employers does not require the kind of detail and planning needed from the school side.

Furthermore, SEDL has earned prestige and credibility as an educational organization throughout almost 20 years of work. The educational focus of the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, its prestige and wide contacts in its region, will help to facilitate as well as support the distribution and promotion of the guidelines to state educators. In turn, it will be their responsibility to promote and initiate this program of collaboration in their local communities.

b. Sources of Input to the Guidelines

The following sources of information and knowledge have been used in the development and refinement of the guidelines:

(1) Data gathered from the interviews conducted with 90 parents in dual-earner and single parent families in the Austin area. The concerns and problems that were experienced in relationships with their supervisors, their children's teachers, and other school personnel provided the initial ideas.

(2) The feedback and insights obtained from participants in WPP's working conference on "Increasing Supports for Two-Parent and Single Parent Working Families" held during the Fall of 1983. Participants included educators, service providers, researchers, and advocates for children and families from SEDL's six-state region.

(3) Information about other programs/projects existing in other localities within and outside the SEDL region that was collected as part of the activities under Objective 1.

(4) Several sample copies of other guides, some related and some unrelated to program implementation, have been used as sources of information for WPP's guidelines.

(5) Finally, the most important source of insights has been the actual experience of promoting and implementing the program in the Austin area. Dealing with seven different school districts of various sizes and at different stages of growth and development, provided WPP staff with a better understanding of the relative importance of factors such as size, location, stage of growth and development, socioeconomic level of the population, and overall readiness for change. This information, in the form of suggested strategies to deal with some of these issues, has been incorporated into the guidelines to make them more adaptable to various conditions of educational agencies and their communities.

c. Assumptions Underlying the Development of the ES/PIE Program, Its Implementation Guidelines, and Its Users

A set of working assumptions have been used during the development of the ES/PIE program and the guidelines for its implementation. The term "guidelines" has been used throughout this report because they are intended to address the needs and actions of both schools and employers, although a single document will be produced to serve the needs of both partners.

The assumptions listed here helped to determine what should and should not be included in the guidelines; the levels of detail and specificity of its contents, the most likely target user groups, and,

the most likely dissemination strategies or channels available for getting the guides into the hands of users.

(1) Assumptions about the ES/PIE program

- o Most parents, including working parents, are interested and concerned about the education of their children.
- o Most educational agency personnel--and especially teachers, counselors, and school principals--want to encourage the highest level of parental involvement in schools and in other educational activities at home and in other community settings.
- o The involvement of parents in the education of their children is a positive force that fosters appropriate behavior in school, greater academic achievement, and better communications between home and school.
- o Most employers, whether in the private or public sector, are willing to consider the involvement of their employees in their children's education as a legitimate concern that can be addressed in the workplace.
- o ES/PIE programs are non-binding collaboration efforts, based on good faith and the mutual interests and goals that are shared by the potential partners.

(2) Assumptions about ES/PIE program implementation process

- o Initiative to implement the ES/PIE program most likely will come from the school/school district partner, or from another educationally-oriented third party, such as professional educators' organizations, parent groups or community groups.
- o Initiatives for implementing the ES/PIE program at a school/school district may not necessarily come from its administrators, such as principals or superintendents. Instead, it could come from parent organizations, teachers, counselors, or other school staff.
- o Attempt to implement ES/PIE programs are at least endorse, if not actively promoted, by the school and or school district leadership.
- o ES/PIE program implementation can proceed in phases or stages over time. These phases or stages can include one, some, or all of the specific WPP recommendations for either partner.

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- o ES/PIE programs can involve one school and one employer; one school and many employers; or one school district and one or more employers. As a matter of fact, the ES/PIE program can have more than one district as the education partner.

- o The ES/PIE program is not restricted to large districts/ large cities with large employers. Many of these kinds of activities could be carried out in relatively small communities.

- o Many educational agencies are already engaged in some of the activities recommended by the ES/PIE program. However, there are administrative and public relations advantages to a comprehensive, concerted, and long-range effort to consolidate and institutionalize such collaboration in the form of a Program, with a special name, clearly identified leaders, and allocated resources.

(3) Assumptions about the ES/PIE program guidelines and its users

- o ES/PIE program guides should be self-contained, so that they can be used without direct or indirect support from its authors.

- o ES/PIE program guides should be in a print format, and produced as a camera-ready prototype, so that interested agencies can reproduce it.

d. Brief Description of the Guidelines

The guidelines, entitled "Increasing Working Parents' Involvement in the Education of their Children: General Guidelines for School-Business Collaboration--An Educators' Guide for Action" include a general introduction that presents a discussion of the research and practice foundations for the ES/PIE program. It is followed by a description of the goals of the program and a schematic representation of goals, core activities, and expected outcomes, plus the set of assumptions underlying the ES/PIE program.

The next section describes the roles that the educational agency and the employer partner play in the collaborative effort.

The implementation strategies proposed are organized into six major sections:

A. What the initiator needs to do to "sell" the ES/PIE to his/her higher authorities.

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B. How to identify, select, and recruit employer partners for ES/PIE.

C. How to prepare the education agency for delivering outreach activities at the workplaces.

D. How to deliver outreach activities.

E. How to encourage and assist employer partners to implement suggested changes in the workplace and its leave policies, if needed.

F. How to evaluate the ES/PIE program on a regular basis.

Each of these sections contains specific steps to be taken, suggested strategies, resources needed, and sample generic documents that can be adapted to meet the specific needs of various education agencies and their communities.

A final section contains a list of regional and national programs, agencies, and organizations that are potential resources for information, assistance, materials, and consultation. The last part is a list of useful references.

4. Objective 6 and Activities

To promote the implementation of WPP's Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education program throughout the SEDL region upon completion of the guidelines on the basis of their application during the pilot year.

Diverse activities carried out starting last year have contributed to awareness on the part of various audiences about the activities and plans of the Working Parents Project, which have increased interest in the guides that constitute the final product. Some of the relevant activities, started last year will be described first. These include:

a. Testimony

The general recommendations containing the basic elements of the ES/PIE program were presented as a document in testimony offered by the Senior Researcher at a Subcommittee of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families hearing held in Washington, D.C. in June of 1984. Several thousand copies of the full text of the hearing have been distributed nationally by the House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families.

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b. "Dual-earner and Single Parent Families: Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration" Document

A further refinement of that document, under the title "Dual-Earner and Single Parent Families: Recommendations for School-Business Collaboration," was used widely as a handout for presentations to a number of conferences, meetings, and workshops, starting at the end of 1984. That document includes a brief summary of the research; presents the basic elements of the school/school district component and the business/employer component recommendations; explains that the program is being implemented in some pilot sites, and announces that revised, refined, and more detailed guidelines will be developed using that experience. That document was distributed at the following meetings:

(1) "Policies and Program Developments Affecting the Work/Family Balance: Helping New Era Families Cope," National Council on Family Relations Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California, October 1984. Fifty participants, and 150 additional copies placed in a resources table.

(2) "Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Schools: The Working Parents Project Proposal," The Conference Board's Work and Family Council Fall Meeting, Minneapolis, Minnesota, October 1984. The 30 council members represent some of the largest national corporations.

(3) "After School Care Needs of Early Adolescents: Working Parents Project Proposal," Three to Six p.m.: Setting Policy for Young Adolescents in the After School Hours, A Wingspread Conference, Racine, Wisconsin, November, 1984. More than 100 participants, including educators, policy-makers, and child care and youth advocates from all over the nation.

c. ES/PIE Program Preliminary Guidelines

These preliminary guidelines are presented in a document distributed in a series of meetings, conferences, and workshops during FY85. These events have provided an avenue to reach a variety of professionals within and outside our region. They were the following:

(1) "Promoting Partnerships Between Parents and Professionals," a Training Institute at the Educational Excellence in Transitional Times Conference, National School Social Work Association of the NASW, New Orleans, Louisiana, January 1985. More than 50 participants at the presentation and 200 copies in the resources table.

(2) "Families and Work: Lifestyles and Priorities," Texas Agricultural Extension Service Training Institute, College Station,

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Texas, July 1985. More than 80 participants were extension agents from throughout Texas.

(3) "Work, Families, and Schools: Research Findings and Recommendations," College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin, July 1985. More than 20 school teachers attending a summer program at The University of Texas.

(4) "Workplace Policies that Affect Parental Involvement in Schools: Some Research Findings," The Conference Board's Work and Family Research Council Fall Meeting, Washington, D.C., October, 1985. The 30 council members represent large five-year contract with NIE to continue serving the southwest region.

(5) "The School and the Family: A Changing Mission?", The Mission of the Public School National Conference Series, National Education Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, October, 1985. More than 120 participants in three presentations; in addition, 300 copies were disseminated at the resources table.

(6) "Work and Family Focus Group Meeting," National Council on Family Relations, Dallas, Texas, November 1985. More than 50 members representing education, child care, and family researchers and practitioners; 100 copies distributed at the resources table.

(7) "Single Parent Families Focus Group Meeting," National Council on Family Relations, Dallas, Texas, November 1985. More than 40 professionals representing education, service providers, and researchers; 100 copies distributed at the resource table.

(8) "Texas Families: A symposium: Critical Issues and Policy Implications," Austin, Texas, November 1985. More than 200 participants from throughout Texas; 200 copies placed at the resources table.

(9) "On Being #1: Developing a climate for Reform in Education," Tenth Annual National Staff Development Conference, National Council of States on Inservice Education, Denver, Colorado, November 1985; 300 copies placed at the resources table.

d. Press Release and Other Activities

A press release was sent to over 20 publications in the region and the nation announcing the availability of the guides. In addition, notices of the availability of the guidelines will be placed on several regional and national electronic bulletin boards and other information utilities.

Negotiations are under way with the Elementary and Early Education ERIC Clearinghouse for a joint publication of the guidelines. Finally, the Office of Communications of the Southwest Educational

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Development Laboratory will make the guidelines available under the new five-year contract with NIE to continue serving the Southwest Region.

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E. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduction

The activities of the Working Parents Project (WPP) during FY85 were designed to create a tangible product which can guide school districts and employers to enhance the participation of working parents in their children's education. The product was developed to contain essential elements of a generic program to address some of the parental involvement needs of working parents. These needs were identified through interviews with sixty dual-earner and single parent families during WPP's research phase. The product called the Employer-Supported Parental Involvement in Education (ES/PIE) Program represents a special form of school-business collaboration. In addition to WPP's research base, ES/PIE also incorporates input from participants at a 1983 Working Conference held by WPP. It also uses information obtained about other projects being implemented in various communities in the region and the nation.

The final product (ES/PIE Implementation Guidelines), represents a refinement and expansion of an earlier version which has been enriched and enhanced from experiences obtained while WPP staff monitored and assisted with ES/PIE program pilot implementation efforts of three Austin area school districts.

2. Other Programs Aimed at Working Parents

WPP's efforts to identify other projects that addressed the needs of working parents uncovered a wide range of programs. These included such programs as child care for preschool children, before/after school care for elementary school children, tutoring, homework assistance, and latchkey children hot lines. Othe programs addressed social, emotional, and economic needs of working parents and single parents. However, only one program was identified which specifically sought possible assistance from employers to facilitate the involvement of working parents in their children's education. It was located in Houston, Texas.

As part of the Houston Independent School District's Fail Safe program, an appeal was made by the school superintendent asking employers to facilitate the attendance of their employees at mandatory parent-teacher conferences scheduled during a two-day period. Parents of elementary school children in the Houston ISD were furnished with a letter addressed to "Dear Employer," and were instructed to deliver it to their supervisors. This letter was offered as support for their requests to obtain time off and meet with their children's teachers. Unfortunately, no evaluation data was collected to measure the effectiveness of this action.

3. Other Forms of School-Business Collaboration

Information collected by WPP about a variety of other types of business-school collaboration programs particularly those dealing with the increasing number of "Adopt-a-School" programs, highlighted the benefits and shortcomings of those efforts. In addition to WPP staff reviewing reports in the educational literature, a series of interviews were held with the key officers of Austin ISD's highly successful Adopt-a-School (AAS) program. These officials included the chairman of the AAS Executive Committee, officials of the Austin ISD, and staff of the Austin Chamber of Commerce.

AAS programs in general, and those of Austin ISD in particular, have been successful in getting some of the adopting businesses' employees closer to the schools, through visits, joint projects, tutoring, field trips, and donations of money. products and services. However, just as is the case in children's adoptions, schools also vary in their desirability to be adopted. Adopters also vary in terms of their relative "wealth."

In spite of concerted efforts by AAS officials, there are still some schools that have not yet been adopted. However, some schools have been adopted by more than one business. Austin AAS officials have encouraged adoption of schools and special programs within schools by other community organizations, and not solely by businesses. This is designed to expand the support base for the AAS program. The list of adopters includes major corporations and employers in the area. as well as many medium and small businesses.

AAS programs have been credited with (1) getting top business leaders closer to the schools, e.g., sharing a school lunch with young children, teachers, and some of their employees; (2) offering many non-parents opportunities for meaningful community involvement and service; (3) providing schools with extra help in the form of employees' personal time, and often also some compensated time devoted to school projects; (4) benefitting schools directly with improvements, materials, monetary, and other kinds of assistance; (5) increasing cohesiveness among employees and loyalty to their employers; and (6) providing schools and adopting businesses with significant media coverage of their activities, thereby enhancing their public image.

The location of most businesses away from their employees' neighborhoods, the patterns of residential mobility. and the disruption of the neighborhood school concept due to compliance with integration decrees in many communities, all combine to make it highly unlikely that a business have many employees with children who attend the same school. Typical AAS activities are often general projects that benefit all children. If they involve direct personal contacts, these are not designed to be between parents and their own children. Therefore, AAS programs, by design, offer no direct advantages

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or benefits to working parents or their children.

What AAS programs, and other forms of school-business partnerships are accomplishing is the creation of a climate that helps express total community concern for the improvement of education. It is here that WPP staff see an opportunity to address the specific needs of working parents, while at the same time helping school administrators improve their communications with working parents. This also opens the way for employers to address the needs of a significant segment of their work force--parents who work full-time.

4. ES/PIE Program

The ES/PIE Program's collaboration concept is unique in that it (1) is targeted to impact the ability and availability of working parents to participate in the education of their children, (2) is sponsored and facilitated by employers, (3) uses the workplace as a way to reach parents where they are a good part of their day, and (4) uses school officials and administrators as authoritative messengers of educational information, knowledge and skills delivered to those who need them.

Conclusion: ES/PIE can become a cost-effective program for reaching a traditionally underserved population. As such the program has the potential for empowering working parents with the necessary tools, information, and opportunities for use in improving their children's education.

5. Time Needed to Implement the ES/PIE Program

The experiences of various districts when piloting ES/PIE and observed by staff indicates that the implementation process requires considerable time in preparing a school district prior to its recruiting and committing employers to participate. Educators need to plan for and expect that it will take more than one school year for a program of this nature to be implemented. There is no quick solution for a need that will continue to exist and is being renewed with every new cohort of children entering school each year.

ES/PIE was designed as a program made of two core components: (1) outreach services provided by schools to parents in the workplace, and (2) increased flexibility from employers to allow working parents access to educational information and to participate more fully in their children's schools. Some activities within the core components of ES/PIE can meet the immediate needs of a school district, and therefore will be adopted rather quickly. Other program activities may require that the partnerships be more extensively developed and allowed to mature before they become feasible. Change within organizations, whether they are schools or businesses,

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always takes longer than what individuals within those organizations would like.

Recommendation: The ES/PIE program should be viewed as an initial investment of effort for something that will eventually become a regular part of the range of educational services provided by schools and school districts. Individuals who plan the implementation of ES/PIE will need to consider time as a factor in planning and implementing successful employer-school district partnerships.

6. Importance of School District Size and Resources

WPP staff's experience in monitoring implementation of ES/PIE also indicates that although the relative size and resources of school districts are a distinct advantage, the basic concept of ES/PIE is one that also can be carried out by relatively small districts. However, the critical factors for their success are (1) that educators identify improving communications with working parents as a need, (2) that this need be recognized as important by both educational leaders and employers, (3) that educators have access to information about the ES/PIE Program to decide how feasible it is for their community, and (4) that they have access to sufficient information and resources for ES/PIE implementation.

Recommendation: It is imperative that dissemination of information about the availability of ES/PIE-like efforts be aimed at top-level state and local administrators as well as professional education/parent organizations to help develop, implement, and sustain employer-school district partnerships that enhance working parent participation in their children's education.

7. Business-Employers Characteristics that Help ES/PIE Implementation

There are no two employers or businesses that are exactly alike. Many factors, some quite idiosynchratic, can account for the adoption or rejection of the partnership concept by businesses. Yet, there are indicators that can help identify the more likely candidates. These include (1) having a large proportion of women in their work force, although great care has been devoted to characterize this program as directed to working parents, rather than solely to working mothers; (2) being employers or businesses that are stable, successful, or growing steadily; (3) being businesses or employers that offer other types of programs and assistance as part of their human resources management approach, such as Employee Assistance Programs, Wellness Programs, child care assistance, and adoption of a school or school program; and (4) having a track record of general involvement with and concern for community needs as expressed by charitable

contributions, participation of managers and employees in community boards and commissions and the like.

When times are hard and business is slow, it is hard to convince managers and school officials to allocate expenditures of time and resources to programs that do not seem to address the core functions of their businesses, whether it is production of goods or services or education. However, more and more employers and business leaders are beginning to see the well-being and loyalty of their employees as something that they want to nurture and protect as one of their business's primary assets.

Recommendation: Uncertain economic conditions should not be taken, in and by themselves, as indications that it is a bad time for school districts to invest both effort and resources to invite employers to participate in the ES/PIE Program. Business and employers will be supportive of collaborative efforts such as ES/PIE when they perceive them as a viable way to maintain their employees' satisfaction. Thus, school districts are urged to seek support for ES/PIE efforts with a focus on working parents' well-being rather than businesses' well-being.

8. Importance of Educators' Leadership in Implementing ES/PIE

The ES/PIE Program is designed as two-way collaboration. The effort required from school districts to implement ES/PIE is relatively modest when compared to the time, energy and resources that will be obtained from employers and working parent families. These efforts, therefore, constitute a relatively small investment compared to its potential yield in enriching the educational services of schools, and in expanding educational opportunities for all children.

Conclusion: The ES/PIE Program, with its goal to increase working parents' involvement in the education of their children, is a challenge primarily to educators because without their leadership and support the extra effort involved in implementing ES/PIE will not be spent. If educators rise to this challenge, they can in turn move businesses and employers to open up their doors to information from schools and to facilitate their employees' involvement in their children's education.

The final outcome, if schools, employers, and parents do their share of the effort, is an enriched educational experience for children, their parents, and the whole community.

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F. SIGNIFICANCE OF PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The ES/PIE Program Implementation Guidelines, which are the final product of this project, represent the culmination of a research utilization process that started with the formulation of some basic research questions. It then proceeded with a study designed to collect empirical data from a selected sample, analyzed the findings, and offered some conclusions. After that, the process involved the collection of additional support and validation from a broader spectrum of educators and practitioners. With that input, some preliminary recommendations were offered. These recommendations, later reshaped into a comprehensive program, were followed by a strategy to have that program implemented on a pilot basis. The monitoring of these pilot implementation efforts provided data to complete the process of revising and refining the ES/PIE Program Implementation Guidelines. These guidelines can now be used by others to implement the ES/PIE Program to suit their own local needs and resources.

The ES/PIE Program Implementation Guidelines should be useful to assist schools and school districts' administrators in a variety of geographic and socio-economic settings in developing the kind of school-employer partnerships that the ES/PIE Program calls for. The guidelines also can help educators meet the challenge they face in their efforts to improve the quality of schools while resources to undertake this are shrinking fast, while on the other hand school populations are experiencing rapid growth and change. A larger than ever proportion of school children will come from families where both parents work full-time, and a large proportion also will come from single parent families.

The ES/PIE Program has been designed to address the special needs of parents who work full time outside the home. These working parents often experience difficulties in assisting with their children's education due to a lack of time, information, or skills to do so. Also, restrictions on their time and availability are often associated with their work schedules and the timing of school events but can be relieved with flexibility on the part of employers and schools alike.

The ES/PIE Program guidelines can further assist educators in meeting the serious challenges they face by (1) mobilizing both support and resources from the business community and other community organizations to improve schools and education; (2) increasing the number and diversity of links between schools and the business community, particularly employers of parents with school-age children; (3) increasing the quantity and quality of working parents' participation in schools and education; and (4) making parents and community feel more ownership of a responsibility for local efforts

aimed at providing all children with quality education and effective schools.

The ES/PIE Program proposes concrete ways in which schools, working parents, and their employers can unite to improve the quality of schools and the education that all children receive. As such, it can be an instrument to generate greater community cohesiveness by providing all local stakeholders with a goal that they can all share and support: better educational opportunities for all children.

G. Deliverables

1. Three quarterly progress reports, submitted February 28, 1985, May 31, 1985, and August 31, 1985.

2. One annual report of project work submitted November 30, 1985 (10 copies).

APPENDIX

WORKING PARENTS PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

WORKING PARENTS PROJECT
BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Bibliography has been classified into the following and is listed in the following categories:

Contents

1. Black and minority families and their children. comparisons with majority families

2. Business/corporate policies, practices and programs that are relevant to families and children, including leaves, benefits, EPA's, employer supported child care, etc.

3. Child care in general, including after school care, standards, latchkey, etc.

4. Divorce, its effects on parents, children, programs and services directed to them, etc.

5. Family in general, theories, research, family roles, marriage remarriage, parenting, child rearing sex roles

6. Home-school relations and programs. including parental involvement, tutoring, homework, and other educational issues relating to parents and families

7. Local interest materials about Austin Austin Independent School District, etc.

8. Methodology, instruments, tests, inventories, etc.

9. Single-parent families and their children

10. Work and family interrelationships

11. Employment statistics, demographics, unemployment, career education, training and children's perceptions and attitudes towards work

12. Working women; statistics, demographics, labor market, attitudes of and towards, etc.

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